33% of the dealerships/distributorships in each of the above categories will be reserved for women in that category.

(d) During the last three years i.e., from 1998-99 to 2000-2001, 915 retail outlets were allotted by the oil marketing companies.

LPG connections in Andhra Pradesh

602. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG connections and kerosene outlets given by oil companies in Andhra Pradesh during the last two years, 2000 and 2001;

(b) the target set up for the year 2002; and

(c) the steps being taken to achieve the target?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have released about 16 lakh and 9 lakh LPG connections in the State of Andhra Pradesh during the year 2000 and 2001 respectively. Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) has allotted only one SKO-LDO dealership in the State of Andhra Pradesh during the year 2001. Other OMCs have not allotted any SKO-LDO dealership during the last two years in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

(b) and (c) The allotment of SKO-LDO dealerships is a continuous process and no fixed target has been set up for such allotment for the year 2002. However, the LPG connections are available on demand in all the existing markets throughout the country including the State of Andhra Pradesh.

National Gas Reserves in Western Coast

†603. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are quite active in exploration of natural gas;

(b) if so, whether there are signs of natural gas reserves on the Western Coast of the country;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, whether Government have taken any action in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) As on 1.1.2002, 57 "finds" of natural gas associated with oil and 31 "finds" of non associated natural gas had been established by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) in their areas of operations in the West Coast. In addition, Government have awarded 25 exploration blocks in West Coast Offshore to National Oil Companies (NOCs) and various private/joint venture companies. Out of the above number, 7 blocks were awarded prior to New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) and 18 blocks were awarded under the first and second rounds of NELP.

Oil and natural gas have been discovered in 4 prospects in one of the exploration block, CB-OS-2, operated by a private company. One prospect of another exploration block, CB-OS-2, is also presently under development.

West Coast Refinery Project

604. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of West Coast Project and its location; and

(b) the total project coast of West Coast Refinery Project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) West Coast Refinery Project of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) was proposed as joint venture between HPCL and Oman Oil Company (OOC) for setting up a 6 million metric tonnes per annum grassroot refinery at an estimated cost of Rs. 4407.11 crore at December, 1994 prices at Deoghar (Maharashtra). However, HPCL dropped the proposal subsequently in view of withdrawal of participation by OOC from the project, and due to addition of new refining capacity in the western region of the country.